

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace without prejudice, all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1-24: (cancelled)

Claim 25 (original): A leaf spring element having a first lateral portion, a second lateral portion and a central portion acting as a spring and located between the first lateral portion and the second lateral portion,

each of the first and second lateral portions having a substantially rectangular shape and comprising a slanted leg, each slanted leg comprising a first leg portion and a second leg portion, the first leg portion substantially lying in a first plane, the second leg portion substantially lying on a second plane different from the first plane, the second leg portion ending with a hollow section, each of the first and second lateral portions comprising a first corner substantially facing the central portion;

the central portion being a bent central portion having a substantially trapezoidal shape and having a first slanted edge and a second slanted edge;

the leaf spring element further comprising first and second cut sections separating the central portion from the first and second lateral portions respectively, each of the first and second cut sections having a distal end and a proximate end, the distal end being located between the first or second slanted edge and the first corner of the first and second lateral portions.

Claim 26 (original): The leaf spring element of claim 25, wherein the second plane is substantially perpendicular to the first plane.

Claim 27 (original): The leaf spring element of claim 25, wherein each of the first and second lateral portions comprises a second corner and a third corner, distal to the central portion, each of the first and second lateral portions comprising a first tooth located adjacent the second corner and a second tooth located adjacent to the third corner, the first and second teeth located in a third plane and the first and second lateral portions located in a fourth plane different from the third plane.

Claim 28 (original): The leaf spring element of claim 27, wherein the third plane is substantially perpendicular to the fourth plane.

Claim 29 (original): A process for manufacturing a leaf-spring element comprising: annealing a material; cutting the annealed material; bending the cut annealed material; and heat treating the bent cut annealed material.

Claim 30 (original): The process of claim 29, wherein the leaf spring element is the leaf spring element of claim 25.

Claim 31 (original): A hinging assembly comprising the leaf spring element according to claim 25 and a hinge pin allowing connection of the leaf spring element with an item.

Claim 32 (original): An item comprising the hinging assembly of claim 31.

Claim 33 (original): The item according to claim 32, wherein the item is a watch.

Claim 34 (original): A base element to be used with a watch case, comprising:
a substantially circular central portion having a first curved edge and a second curved edge; and
two side portions integral with the central portion,
wherein the central portion comprises, along the first curved edge, a hinging region to allow the base element to be hingedly connected with the watch case, and, in proximity of the second curved edge, a recessed region to allow a further connection between the base element and the watch case.

Claim 35 (original): The base element of claim 34, wherein the side portions comprise bent edges.

Claim 36 (original): The base element of claim 34, wherein the recessed region is a locking region allowing locking between the base element and the watch case.

Claim 37 (original): The base element of claim 34, wherein the recessed region provides a recess for a crown of the watch case.

Claim 38 (original): The base element of claim 34, further comprising a path providing region allowing an item to be inserted.

Claim 39 (original): The base element of claim 38, wherein the path-providing region is a recessed region.

Claim 40 (original): The base element of claim 38, wherein the path providing region includes slightly risen edges.

Claim 41 (original): A hinging assembly comprising a watch case and a base element, the base element is the base element of claim 34.

Claim 42 (original): The hinging assembly of claims 41, wherein the base element is flat.

Claim 43 (original): The hinging assembly of claim 41, wherein the base element is concave.

Claim 44 (original): The hinging assembly of claim 41, wherein a hinge pin is positioned in the hinging region of the base element, the hinge pin connecting the watch case with the base element.

Claim 45 (original): The hinging assembly of claim 41, wherein the watch case comprises an external side visible during normal use of the watch and an internal side not visible during normal use of the watch, the internal side having an overall peripheral shape substantially matching a peripheral shape of the base element.

Claim 46 (original): The hinging assembly of claim 45, wherein the watch case comprises a crown, and the internal side is so shaped to allow the crown to come into engageable connection with the recessed region of the base element.

Claim 47 (original): The hinging assembly of claim 45, wherein the internal side comprises a substantially rectangular region.

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Claim 48 (original): The hinging assembly of claim 47, wherein the substantially rectangular region is centrally disposed and slightly recessed with respect to a remaining part of the internal side.

Claim 49 (original): The hinging assembly of claim 45, wherein the internal side comprises a substantially oval region.

Claim 50 (original): The hinging assembly of claim 41, adapted to be used with a watch band, the watch band inserted between the watch case and the base element.

Claim 51 (currently amended): The hinging assembly of claim 50, wherein the watch band comprises a magnet assembly ~~according to claim 1,~~ suitable to be connected to a metal assembly in an engaging fashion, the magnet assembly comprising: an upper portion; and a lower magnetic portion connected with the upper portion.

Claim 52 (currently amended): The hinging assembly of claim 50, wherein the watch band comprises a metal assembly ~~according to claim 13,~~ suitable to be secured to a substantially flat item, the metal assembly comprising:

one or more metal elements, each of the one or more metal elements having a mating portion and an engaging portion; and

one or more rivets, each of the one or more rivets being connected with each of the one or more metal elements through the engaging portion, thereby securing the assembly to the item,

wherein the metal assembly is further connectable to a magnet assembly in a mating fashion.

Claim 53 (currently amended): The hinging assembly of claim 50, wherein the watch band comprises a snapping mechanism ~~according to claim 18,~~ suitable to secure portions of a substantially flat item, the snapping mechanism comprising a magnet assembly and a metal assembly, the magnet assembly having an upper portion and a lower magnetic portion connected with the upper portion, the metal assembly having one or more metal elements, each of the one or more metal elements having a mating portion and an engaging portion, the metal assembly further having one or more rivets, each of the one or more rivets connected with each of the one

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or more metal elements through the engaging portion, thereby securing the metal assembly to the item, the metal assembly being connectable to the magnet assembly in a mating fashion.

Claims 54-64: cancelled

Claim 65 (original): A watch band to be used in conjunction with a watch case having an upper surface and a lower surface, the watch band comprising:

a portion having a shape substantially matching a shape of the lower surface of the watchcase.

Claim 66 (original): The watch band of claim 65, wherein the portion of the watch band and the lower surface of the watchcase have a substantially circular shape.

Claim 67 (original): The watch band of claim 65, wherein the portion of the watch band and the lower surface of the watchcase have a substantially oval shape.

Claims 68-73: (cancelled)